

Lawrence Wilkerson: Araghchi Meets Putin as Russia Goes All-In on Iran

Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson discusses the meeting between Iran's Foreign Minister Araghchi and President Putin, as both Iran and Russia lose trust in US diplomacy. Wilkerson is a retired Colonel in the US Army and the former Chief of Staff to the US Secretary of State. Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glennDiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glennDiesen> YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@GDiesen1> Support the research: PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glennDiesen> Buy me a Coffee: buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

#Glenn

Welcome back. We are joined today by Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, who spent decades in the U.S. military, from serving in the mid-1960s during the Vietnam War to becoming the chief of staff to the U.S. Secretary of State. So thank you very much for taking the time.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Secretary of State. Oh, I...

#Glenn

I made this mistake once before. Sorry, U.S. Secretary of State, not Defense. I apologize, and thank you for the correction. Colin Powell, I should add, which was, of course, quite a troubling time in the United States as well with the invasion of Iraq. And I guess there are a lot of parallels to our present era. So, I wanted to start off with what's been happening very recently now — that is, Iran's foreign minister. He went to Russia and has now met with President Putin, and both their countries see themselves as fighting an existential war in which the U.S., I guess, is a common adversary. What do you think, though, is the significance of this meeting?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Well, what he needs to do now is drop by Beijing and see Xi Jinping. I think the significance of the meeting is pretty much summed up by the words that Putin uttered following the meeting. It was sort of, to me, like "in your face, Empire." You may think that you're going to pursue this to the nth degree, but this country that you're pursuing it against has allies. One of its allies is fairly formidable — it's me. And if you want to talk, I'm willing to talk, but you aren't going to make much headway

with this particular war. So why are you waging it? I mean, that's kind of the way I read it. But what I'm really impressed with — again, I had this conversation yesterday with another individual who is somewhat skeptical — I said there are three true diplomats in the world: Wang Yi, Sergei Lavrov, and Abbas Araghchi. They are proving their mettle.

And he actually came back with this as a counter: well, he's doing whatever the IRGC says because they're in control. They're in control. There's no one else in the Islamic Republic of Iran in control but the IRGC, so he's doing whatever they want. I said, bingo, bingo. That's what a really good diplomat does. He does what his leadership tells him to do, and he does it with finesse. He does it with, dare I say, diplomacy. He does it with quintessential skills. He doesn't deviate — not a Witkoff, not a Kushner — not there to make billions of dollars off contracts that they can affect on the sides of the talks. He's there for the government, such as it is and what it is, and he's doing their bidding, and he's doing it well. And this meeting with Putin was a quintessential example of that. Oh, well, you can have your opinion. I have mine.

#Glenn

Well, I'm also thinking that the two countries, there are other things in common. That is, the absence of diplomatic solutions has resulted in what were initially quite reasonable demands being escalated to some extent. That is, Russia initially had some demands of restoring Ukraine's neutrality. That is, NATO's incursion into Ukraine was considered an existential threat. But in the absence of any political will or solution, this manifested itself into a territorial dispute where the Russians now are seeking to control the territory that they can't afford ending up in the hands of NATO. Now, with the Iranians, it looks like they also had quite reasonable security concerns. That is, they can't live under crippling sanctions for decades more. They don't want to have perpetual military threats on their borders anymore.

And this essentially manifested itself into the crisis of Hormuz, as controlling this essentially allows them, well, not just to have reparations and pressure on countries to stop threatening Iran by, well, not hosting U.S. bases. But, you know, if there were any serious negotiations, some of these things could be solved. But, you know, for the Russians, they saw seven years of sabotaging the Minsk Agreement and sabotaging Istanbul. The Iranians, of course, had two negotiations ending up in surprise attacks. And now these negotiations don't seem serious either. So how do you see us going forward? From here on, is this going to be essentially a war in Iran and Russia? Well, I mean, focusing on Iran, which will just end in one side capitulating? Or do you think there is, I guess, a common ground?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Let me back up, if I may, to what my original conception— I never remember whether I've discussed it with you at length or with others, but let me just rehearse it a bit here. I think what we're looking at, as I've said many times before, is that we are engaged in a global struggle. Call it the Great

Game renewed, if you will, but we're engaged in a global struggle. I see it developing in the Arctic, majorly in the Arctic right now, because Russia has invited China, at China's request—something we denied China when they asked, for example, to be a member of the Arctic Council—up to the Arctic, and essentially saying, you can share with me my coastline on the Arctic, which happens to be the longest, most effective.

Canada may have a few more kilometers, but Russia's got the most effective coastline on what is going to be a new passage for commerce and other things. So that's the top of the theater. The middle of the theater, if you will, is the Baltic and the Baltic states, who are trying their best to start a war with Russia. The center of the theater, if you will, is Ukraine. And then next to that is Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and the Caucasus in general, and Central Asia even more in general. And then the bottom is Iran. And it's all about—and I don't know if Donald Trump knows this; I don't think he does, he's too stupid to know this—but there are people behind Donald Trump who know this. There are people in the Pentagon who know this. And I don't mean Pete Eckset. We are waging a global conflict with China through proxies.

And that's what this is all about at the top of the strategic spectrum, if you will. And if you don't follow that from the perspective of the mistakes we're making, then you're missing what is really going to eliminate this empire in a far shorter time than I thought it would take to eliminate it. And by eliminate it, I don't mean 340 million people are going away, but I mean the power of the empire is dwindling rapidly. And it's all under Donald Trump's leadership. It's all under Pete Hegseth and Marco Rubio's leadership. So I have to think that they do know a little bit about what they're doing. And what they're doing, of course, is what stupid people do. And Clausewitz is full of this sort of thing. When they're losing, they double down on whatever it was they were doing.

In our case, it's two things and two things only: sanctions and military power, military power and sanctions. So that's the landscape, I think, that you have to look at—that we're going after China through various proxies. That's the reason, for example, this morning I had a long conversation with a person from Ukraine who wants Zelenskyy gone, wants him gone, and cited polls to me, which I don't doubt—polls showing that 60 to 80 percent of Ukrainians want him gone too. But he's managing the polls. He's managing the word that comes out of Ukraine. And most people aren't getting this. But the Ukrainians want this to stop. They want it to be over with. And I'm telling her, I'm sorry, it isn't going to be, because you are a pawn in a much bigger global struggle. And Iran is just the latest chapter in it.

I think other leaders like Putin and Xi Jinping in particular, but also Modi in India, who is hosting, you may know, the next BRICS conference in India next month, as I understand it. And I just stumbled on some really interesting information. They've just developed the Agni, A-G-N-I, I believe it is, 5, which is a 30,000—yeah, you heard me right—30,000 kilometer per hour missile. It's road-transportable, it's erectable on the road, fireable on the road. It has a 5,000-mile range with a 7,000-

mile capability if it's extended. This is an incredible missile that no Golden Dome could ever even dream of stopping. And it has nuclear warheads, of course. So BRICS is coming up as an alternative, of course, but it's coming up very slowly. And maybe this is going to speed it up, accelerate it.

But it is coming up as an alternative to individual countries, regardless of their alliances, like Russia and China, disputing all this. So it's going to be 60 percent or better of the world disputing all this. Into this comes the Iran conflict, which has its own, below that level of geopolitical discussion. It has its own exigencies, and they are things like we might be in recession by June. We might be in depression, global depression, by September if we keep this crap up. So the big question to me is, how much longer will the idiots in charge of us—Rubio, Hegseth, and Trump—go on with this at the behest of the people behind the curtains, if the people behind the curtains are going to start tweaking them a bit because they understand this is going to be a disaster? Unless... unless they're all queued up to jump ship, unless they're all queued up to go elsewhere, as it were.

And I don't know what the answer to that question is, but I'm seeing this happen, and I'm thinking to myself, all the time I'm watching it happen, man, this is a disaster. This is a disaster from Russia breaking the Monroe Doctrine again and sending another ship to Cuba, to Turkey, Erdogan deciding to send help to Cuba, to what's going on in Iran, what's going on elsewhere, and saying the empire seems to be—Washington seems to be—oblivious to all this at the superficial level of Donald Trump. So how do we get out of this? How do we even arrest this momentum towards our own demise that is really accelerating? At the same time, we deal with our domestic problems, which are deepening, and get rid of Trump and get rid of this administration so we can get some sense into what we're doing.

If you want to continue to pursue this strategy, that's fine. It's a strategy. You can do it, but you've got to be smarter. You've got to be smarter because the other side is not stupid, and the other side is winning, including in Southwest Asia. Go back to high rates. All Iran has to do to win is not lose. All we have to do to win is achieve a spectacular victory. Bibi is proving in Lebanon right now that he is an idiot suddenly. I always thought he was smart—if devious, if demented, homicidal, maniacal, and so forth. Yes, all those things. Genocidal, all those things. A Hitler, yes, all those things. But I thought he was smart enough to realize not to take on something that would destroy him almost in his face.

#Glenn

And he's doing that in Lebanon.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

He's doing that in Lebanon. And we're aiding and abetting it, of course. I don't know to what extent, but I think we are aiding and abetting it—ammunition, things like that. So that's a frenetic summary, but we're in trouble. We're in deep trouble in the empire, and we have no leadership whatsoever—

no leadership that knows what's going on, that understands it, and can deal with it in at least a halfway smart way.

#Glenn

It seems like this crisis works on so many levels. That is, the Trump administration is now in a crisis. You can argue that even the U.S. Republic—definitely the U.S. Empire—but also the wider international system, everything appears to be cracking at the moment. And I was wondering, with the war now against Iran, not just the initial attack and the assumption that it could be defeated, but also the assumed exit strategy or the failure to accept what kind of peace they would have to accommodate if they want to put an end to this war. I'm just wondering, how do you see the U.S. misjudging Iran's resilience as well as its willingness to absorb all this economic and military pain? Because based on what seemed to be an initial assumption about a weekend victory, it was so predictable that this would go so terribly wrong. So how do you think they ended up in this situation?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

They didn't recognize, as I've said many times before, the nature of the conflict. They thought it was just another deal where they go out and bomb people, and after a few bombs fell—a lot of bombs fell—those people would be compliant. That's not happening. So they don't know what to do. And with the Air Force officers, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, I feel like that is actually feeding it, because the Air Force is the service in the empire that thinks bombs solve all problems. They don't. They never have. They never will. I think we're at a point now, if you parse some of the tactical language around Trump right now, we're at a point where they are desperately searching for what I will call something as good as the JCPOA, but attached to it, an aura of Trumpian victory. So that's how they boil this down to a way to escape.

It doesn't count on Netanyahu or Naftali Bennett and Lapid screwing it up, which they probably will try to do. But what they want to do is they want to achieve some kind of JCPOA-like agreement that looks like it's much better than the JCPOA, has a longer timeline, if you will, has more things included in it that the IAEA can check up on and so forth—that bastard organization that really belongs to us still—and come out of the war with this triumph, that they got something better than Obama got. Look what Trump got you. Look what we did in terms of the nuclear program. I think they boiled it down pretty much to that. They're prepared to forget the ballistic missiles. They're prepared to forget all the other things that we once said were absolutely adamant in terms of determining whether or not we quit this war or not.

They're just looking for a nuclear agreement that they can hold up and say, we've achieved what we wanted to achieve. That probably includes someone like Russia taking the highly enriched uranium for an interim period of time, or forever in practice. I don't know, but I think that's where they are now with regard to a prima facie end of this conflict. I don't know if they're going to get that or not. The Iranians, if they're smart, will detect that—and they are smart—and they will probably go along

with it and work out a deal, and that'll stop the bombing at least, and maybe the Strait will go back to some kind of normal practice. Don't know. I made a comment on Turkish radio the other day—yesterday, God, I can't keep up anymore—about how we ought to.

Vali Nasr was on there, an Iranian journalist, Iranian and living in London. And they kind of pooh-poohed this. But I said, you know, if you went back to the Law of the Sea Treaty, you would not only be returning to international law in an almost total absence of it, created mostly by the empire, but you would have some practical solutions to this. You could have a framework within the Law of the Sea Treaty about archipelagos and straits, and certain straits like the Strait of Malacca, the Bab al-Mandeb, and the Strait of Hormuz, and a few others in the world that are critical—really critical—for economic travel and for global success in that travel. And you could forge a treaty-compliant, reinvigorating Law of the Sea Treaty regime that Iran would accept and that we would accept.

Why don't we do that? Well, nobody wants to. This is characteristic of what I deal with. Nobody wants to return to international law. International law is dead. Well, if you want to go there, then you want to be purely Hobbesian. You want to join John Mearsheimer. You want to say the world is back according to Hobbes, and we aren't going to have any international law, no International Criminal Court, no Law of the Sea Treaty, nothing. We're just going back to rape, pillage, and plunder, and he with the biggest gun to plunder and rape is going to win. That's where we're going. I don't understand that. Why don't we want to resurrect one aspect at least of it and give it some oomph, give it some success?

I know the United Nations is feckless right now, particularly with this Secretary-General and this Security Council. But let's try it. Let's try it. Let's go back and say, OK, we're going to affect the Law of the Sea Treaty with regard to this strait. It's a very important strait. Interestingly, the way I read the treaty is you would comply with about 75% of what Iran apparently wants, and you would comply with about 50% of what we want. But most of all, you would comply with the world's need to have the strait open and functioning. And if you get all these ships out of the way, you get people going again. But we're not going to do that, probably because, one, we don't understand international law.

Two, we're not signatories to the Law of the Sea Treaty, although we have said we will comply with it, and we do largely. And we're the largest enforcer of it. What is freedom of navigation operations by the empire? What is it about except the Law of the Sea Treaty and enforcement thereof? Glenn, I don't understand these people. I do not understand them, except that I go back to my original comments. They're all so frightened of losing, and losing big time, to China and maybe a consortium of China, India, Russia, the BRICS in general, that they'll do anything to stop that. They'll kill anybody. They'll bomb anybody. They'll sanction anybody. They'll do anything to stop that.

#Glenn

I think I saw Marco Rubio refer to the Strait of Hormuz as international waters. Technically, it's not international waters, but as you suggested, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea then permits or allows for transit, you know, for the purpose of passage. The problem is that neither the United States nor Iran, though, has actually ratified UNCLOS, or the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. And as you suggested, this is exactly what they both should do. I think this is the role of international law, as you suggest. That's one of the problems of our time, because international law, in accordance with the UN Charter established after World War II, was when there was a balance of power.

So both sides have an incentive to accept some restraints on themselves in return for reciprocity from the other side. I think after the Cold War, you know, if states don't balance themselves, you would assume that the political West would begin to shed constraints on itself, embrace new concepts like humanitarian interventionism, democracy promotion, anything that removes constraints for us but keeps them on others. But that was predictable in a unipolar world when there's one, you know, why would one center want a law that restricts itself? But now that we're pivoting, or already back, in a multipolar world, it doesn't make much sense to assume that other countries will abide by rules which we're looking for, you know, exemption from.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

But what better way, though, to give some oomph back to the UN, and particularly to UNCLOS? You have Iran claiming that because they are a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty as well as the Additional Protocol, and even beyond that—my understanding when I was at State—they have gone, in terms of their promises and written promises, to the United Nations with regard to their nuclear program. And they're not a signatory to the Law of the Sea Treaty. Come on, country, you can't pick and choose like that. You're looking more like the empire. You can't do that. And I know why that is, because Ahmadinejad told me in New York at the UN General Assembly group. Why?

And I know, yeah, you were looking at the Strait of Hormuz and you're saying you don't want it to be ruled by UNCLOS. Sorry, dude, you don't get to pick and choose like that. Now, if we had a decent Secretary-General, if we had a Secretary-General like Helen Clark would have been, had we not stopped her from becoming Secretary-General, you'd have some remonstrances on the world stage. You'd have her standing up and saying, you peckers, get in there and get this straightened out. If you want, I'll help you. I'll bring a hammer with me. That's the way they ought to be operating. But they're not. And they're not operating that way because Guterres has no guts. He has no courage. When we picked him, we picked him for that very reason.

#Glenn

Yeah, well, on international law, I think the Non-Proliferation Treaty is a good example. Well, first of all, international law must mean something. There has to be some interest in abiding by rules. And if

I look at proliferation, countries like Libya and Iraq, who gave up their weapons of mass destruction programs, they were destroyed, while North Korea and Pakistan, who developed their nuclear weapons, are safe. So that's very much the wrong message one wants to send to the world. And same as with Iran, they signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty, so they should have the right to a civilian nuclear program.

But now they're told they're not. Meanwhile, Israel, which didn't sign it, has acquired nuclear weapons and there's no consequence. So, you know, you can only do this for so long before the fabric of international law itself begins to fall apart. But I agree, I don't think the solution should be to just walk away and embrace the chaos. There have to be some efforts to revive it. But my point is always that we also have to accept it, because the unipolar moment is gone. We can't just demand others follow the rules while we exempt ourselves. But...

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I agree 100%. In fact, I think it's more important that we—if you're referring to Europe and the United States in particular—follow it than others. It's absolutely important that we do it because we are the enforcers, really, when it comes time to implement Mao Zedong's dictum that international law comes out of the barrel of a gun. Russia, China, us, India, perhaps—we're the enforcers of it. And if we refuse to enforce it, it's feckless. It's ridiculous. And sometimes empires in particular need to do things that are against their interest in the immediate term, but in their interest in the long term. We've lost that idea. We've lost that concept. I'm not even sure it enters Donald Trump's mind. I'm not sure anything with regard to the relations of nations enters Donald Trump's mind other than money.

#Glenn

Yeah. Well, that's what I hear—that when Hegseth talks about international law as something that constrains the US, then yes, it is. That's what law does. It's what it's for. But it also constrains the other guy. The assumption that the other guy will allow himself to be constrained if our side does not—it's absurd. Again, if there's a unipolar distribution of power, it can go on for some time, but not in any other situation. I do want to pick up on something you said before, though—you said the Baltic states seem very eager to start a war with Russia.

I assume that you're referencing the drone attacks on Russia, which, well, I think it's more or less confirmed now that they're originating from the Baltic states. I would even be doubtful if they even just transit Poland and the Baltic states, because that's quite a long flight. It seems almost more likely that they're launched from the Baltic states as well. But what do you think this means, though? Because... it's a weird time to pick a war with Russia when the Americans no longer stand behind the Europeans. I understand there's a need to escalate when the war isn't going Europe's way, but it seems suicidal.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I can't explain it except in the terms that you just ended with—suicidal. And that is that they think that if they get a real hot war with Russia started with a NATO member, that we'll be back. We'll be back with bells and banjos. We'll be back fully. We won't have any choice. I've got news for them: this administration, at least, doesn't think that way, as far as I can tell. If you get into a war with Russia, you're on your own. And Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Norway, Sweden—you don't want a war with Russia. You really don't, especially not a Russia now that's hard-pressed in two theaters, the Southwest Asian theater and the Ukrainian theater.

And with the empire basically succeeding in one aspect of the struggle in Ukraine, and that is defying reality in terms of Ukraine. As I was saying, the woman in Ukraine who's talking about the polls, I think she's being honest. I think I've followed her for a good while. I don't know what the percentage is, but it's well over half of Ukrainians who want this damn war over. They want it over, and they want the squads that come and steal their children to put them on the front lines to stop. They want the killing to stop. They want the dying to stop. And yet Zelensky persists because the Europeans to an extent, and America to an extent—and to a larger extent than I thought from something I heard yesterday—at least I think it's reliable.

We are still backing them, backing Zelensky 100 percent, still smuggling things to him, still sending things openly to him. So, you know, OK, you're at war with China. But are you prepared to accept that in this war with China, this pseudo war with China, this prelude to the big war with China? Are you willing to accept all these casualties? The apparent answer is yes. And the apparent answer, I suppose, with regard to the Baltic Sea and the areas impinging thereon, is that, OK, if you want to strike the bear in his cave, so to speak, go ahead. That's all right with us.

And I'll get on the phone and I'll call St. Petersburg or Moscow or wherever Putin happens to be. And I'll say, this isn't me. Handle it on your own. And then I'll go away gleefully and say, ah, another problem created for the people who are most opposed to us, China and Russia. I don't know, Glenn. I really don't. I cannot ferret out any coherence to this administration. None whatsoever. In any sphere can I ferret out any coherence. In the sphere of Venezuela, of Cuba, and now we've got Turkey helping Cuba. So we've got two countries violating the Monroe Doctrine on Cuba's behalf. I've got another tanker, as I understand it, a Russian tanker headed for Cuba, also full of oil. And we don't seem to have anything but tactics to display against this wider tapestry of strategy that aims at us. I wish I were a fly on the wall at this BRICS meeting in India.

I would particularly like to hear what Modi has to say and how that is impacted by and adjusted to by Russia and China. Because the three formidable powers in this group, truly formidable powers—India, because of its population, as I said, its growing military capability. This missile, the Agni 5, apparently was developed by the DRDO or something, development and research in India. It's an incredible missile. It's better than anything we have. It's better than anything we have in our arsenal, if the facts being published about it are true. And it's nuclear. So this is a formidable alliance

developing, even with Russia and China as the sole partners, but with India in there and then other Asian countries coming along because they see the handwriting on the wall. This is a formidable alliance. We can take this alliance on all day long. We're going to lose. We're going to lose badly.

#Glenn

Well, about the Russians, though, I think it was Otto von Bismarck. He allegedly said something along those lines—that it's easy to lure the Russian bear out of its cave, but it's much more difficult to put it back in. Yeah. I think that summarizes the situation we're in. If you want to provoke a conflict with Russia, yes, it's one thing, but if it doesn't work—like with the Iran incident—it was this decapitation strike; with the Russians, it was bleeding them white. But when it doesn't work, there's no way of putting an end to this. And I think this is the same problem we're seeing now with Iran.

Again, I think it was considered, you know, a bit of a gamble. If the decapitation strike wouldn't work, okay, we'll just put an end to it, and, you know, we'll try again another day. But it seems as if the Iranians refuse to go back to the way things were. That's why I was also wondering, how do you think—if there's an essential defeat for the U.S. in Iran, what does it actually mean, do you think, in terms of, I guess, it's not a military defeat—the U.S. Army is not going to be defeated—but it would be a political, geopolitical, as well as an economic defeat, wouldn't it?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Well, I think they're going to lie about it as much as they possibly can, and they've still got a MAGA center that believes them. They're going to fashion it as a success, and as I said, they're going to haul out whatever agreement Iran makes with them on the nuclear program as an indication of "better than Obama," it's successful, and everyone will forget about all the other things we demanded because that'll be at the heart of it. And maybe it'll include something really visible and obvious, like uranium going to Russia for five years, or, you know, some other provision whereby the Iranians seem to concede a lot rather than not much at all.

I don't know, but I'm sensing that that's at the heart of what they're talking about right now—declaring victory and getting out. And the way you declare victory is you achieve some kind of nuclear agreement that you can tout as better than the one Obama achieved. And that's it. That's their limited view right now after all these expansive things they've talked about, from ballistic missiles to never having any uranium ever again in Iran to, really, regime change—which, of course, is what Bibi wanted and what Bibi told them in that now highly reported meeting, what Bibi told them was possible. Possible very easily. And now look at Bibi. Bibi is about to lose his ass in Lebanon. I mean, they're getting their rear end handed to them in Lebanon.

And pretty soon, if they keep on doing what they're doing, which is to kill any Lebanese citizen visible on the horizon at any moment of any day, even though there's a ceasefire, if they keep on doing that, they're going to even destroy the one possible ally they have in Lebanon, which is the

government, of course. And he's done. He's toast. I think it's really questionable whether he is going to make it through this election period—make it through in terms of being reelected, and make it through in terms of maybe even being alive. But who knows? And I don't think Lapid and Bennett will be any better than Netanyahu. So we still have the same problem. We just have a lesser light, if you will, in terms of the brainpower managing that problem in Israel.

And I still cling to my supposition and my prediction—not a supposition, a prediction—that Israel won't be here as a Jewish state. It's gone. It's done. It can stay as a democratic state, a real democracy, not the apartheid state it is today, accommodating all the citizens that might be members of it, and eventually, of course, the Palestinian population topping the Jewish population, which won't be hard now because, as I've said before, I think I've heard a million, a million and a half have already left. It's not a safe haven anymore. That was the promise to all those European Jews: you need a safe haven, go there, go to Palestine, you'll have a safe haven, it'll be yours, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. It isn't safe. It isn't safe at all. If they didn't have those bomb shelters, half of Israel would be dead right now.

#Glenn

No, I think after these wars are over, the world will look very different. Just my last question is—perhaps I should have started with this question—Iran recently put forth a proposal to the United States, and there are some indications that Trump is, well, at least signaling that he will reject the Iranian offer if he hasn't already done so. What do you make of this peace proposal?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I think you've got to do that if you're Trump because you can't seem to be so forthcoming with the first offer. This isn't the first offer, but with any offer that seems premature, you've got to fight until the moment comes when you can do the JCPOA over again, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Mess the acronym up even now. Until you can top that in the vernacular, in the way you present it, you can't accept things that look like they would impact that in a negative way. So you've got to get the Iranians down to the point where they at least are sending things that look like that's the issue, and then you claim victory, and you leave.

That's not going to please Netanyahu at all, and it's not going to please those powers that think this is perhaps one of the most important, if not the most important, theaters in this campaign against China. Now, not to say you couldn't—I don't know how much damage we've done to the Southern Railroad. I don't know what China's ability to repair it and Iran's ability to repair it are. I doubt it will be an Iranian top-of-the-list priority to repair it. It probably will be for the Chinese, though, and it will give the Chinese additional access to Iran on the ground in order to help them do that. But I'm not so sure that's going to make any difference to this administration, which is increasingly going to be captured by the fact that they are going to be absolutely blown away in the midterms, and the Republican Party with them.

I think Virginia's recent vote on its redistricting issue is a good indication of that, but it's just one indication. I think there are others all across the country, and I think it's just going to get worse for them. So their focus is going to be increasingly domestic, especially those people who are the vilest people in the administration, in my view, other than Hegseth, whose focus is, of course, going to be overseas. But I think they're going to be just totally consumed as we approach the midterms, either with the chicanery and the downright skulduggery they throw out to try and reverse the situation.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Or with the situation itself, where they're going to lose so badly—or both, probably both.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I think it's going to be a disaster, an utter disaster, for the Republican Party.

#Glenn

Let me squeeze in one last question. Now, with the meeting between the Iranian foreign minister and Putin in Russia, it seems to signal that the Russians are now all in, in terms of their backing of Iran. How do you think this—do you think it will impact the U.S.-Russian relationship in any way? Because, you know, they're trying to solve their own proxy war in Ukraine, and I think the patience is kind of running out a bit in Moscow anyway. I think this is probably good for Putin to some extent, because he's being seen as weak by essentially playing along with this fake diplomacy while the U.S. is still engaged in the proxy war against Russia. But how do you think it's going to shape relations between the U.S. and Russia?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I think that might depend on what is going to be an inevitable phone call between Putin and Trump. How soon it comes is anybody's guess. My guess would be sooner rather than later. And it's going to be a testy phone call. Both men are going to start out probably with amenities and, you know, the pleasantries and so forth. And then it's going to get down to Putin saying, you haven't done what you promised to do, and I'm very, very unhappy with it with regard to Ukraine. And Trump saying, well, you just stood up with the foreign minister of the country I'm most violently at war with right now and said you were on his side.

And then it'll go from there to wherever it goes. But the two men have a habit of working something out, however ephemeral it might be, especially on Trump's side. But I would expect at least a 50-50 chance that this workout, this solution, won't be so ephemeral because of all the things I've just described that even Trump, Luddite that he is, is probably aware of more and more. I haven't even mentioned Epstein. It keeps just raising its ugly head every time I pick something up. And it's still there. It's still going full bore. Iran has not wiped it out.

Maybe it has with the MAGA corps, but it hasn't wiped it out with 60% of Americans. And so he's got all these problems he's got to deal with domestically, as well as Putin, ultimately Xi Jinping, and maybe Modi and the BRICS in general. I don't know that he has the wherewithal in his head, in his brain, to deal with this. So then you have to ask, does his cabinet—and I look at Besson, I look at Patel, I look at Rubio, I look at Hagseth—and I say, no, he doesn't. So how does Putin not come out of this with promises that Trump won't keep? Or worse, no promises at all. But I do think that phone call is imminent.

#Glenn

Well, as always, it's a great pleasure to speak with you, my friend, and thank you so much for sharing your thoughts on this. And yeah, have a great day.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

You too. Take care, and hail Norway.